

COURSE SYLLABUS

I. Course Description/Purpose

BE5315: The purpose of this course is to introduce the student to the social and cultural milieu of Israelite, Jewish, and Greco-Roman life in the Old and New Testament periods. It is intended to aid the student who wishes to do historical-grammatical interpretation of the Bible by introducing him/her to the information and resources available in carrying out the historical and cultural part of the interpretive process.

NT8315: A study of the cultural context of the New Testament, utilizing ancient sources to which the student was exposed in BS8102 New Testament Backgrounds and relevant secondary sources in order to facilitate understanding of the cultural context of and daily life in the first century. Topics such as honor/shame, patronage, family life, and religion will be discussed. The class will meet in conjunction with BE5315 Bible Manners and Customs. Doctoral students in the class will be required to prepare and teach on a topic during the semester.

II. Course Objectives

- A. To expose the student to the cultural institutions and practices of the Old and New Testament world in which the people of Israel, Judaism, and the early church originated and developed.
- B. To provide background and illustrative material conducive to the student's better understanding and more effective teaching of the Bible.
- C. To introduce the student to relevant literature of both a primary and secondary nature in order to stimulate interest and provide a basis for further study.

III. Course Textbooks

OT: King, Philip J. and Lawrence E. Stager, *Life in Biblical Israel*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001.

OT: Ebeling, Jennie R. *Woman's Lives in Biblical Times*. London: T. & T. Clark, 2010.

NT: Ferguson, Everett. *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*. 3rd ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003.

NT: deSilva, David A. *Honor, Patronage, Kinship & Purity: Unlocking New Testament Culture*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000.

IV. Course Requirements

- A. Reading: Read the King and Stager, Ebeling, and deSilva texts according to the schedule. Choose 150 pages of Ferguson to be completed before the end of the semester.
- B. Small Research papers #1: Write an 8-10 page paper on one of the following topics: honor/shame or patronage. Describe the topic for half of the paper and demonstrate how an understanding of this impacts one's interpretation of a biblical passage(s). This paper is intended to be more methodological and reflective. Although you may wish to consult books other than the required texts and commentaries, your focus should be on how the knowledge of the topic in the ancient world affects our understanding of the Bible.
- C. Small Research papers #2: Write an 8-10 page paper on one aspect of following topics: family or religion. These are broad topics and you will need to focus on a specific area. It may be worthwhile to discuss your topic with the professor. Describe the topic for half of the paper and demonstrate how an understanding of this impacts one's interpretation of a biblical passage(s). As with paper #1, this paper is intended to be more methodological and reflective. Although you may wish to consult books other than the required texts and commentaries, your focus should be on how the knowledge of the topic in the ancient world affects our understanding of the Bible.
- D. Research paper (**be5315 only**): Write a 20 page paper on a significant cultural area and its impact on the Bible. Demonstrate your study's impact on interpretation. Half the description should describe the cultural phenomenon and the other should focus on the biblical text. This may be done through focusing on a specific passage(s) or on a theme.
- E. Research paper (**nt8315 only**): In consultation with the professor early in the semester, write a 25 page paper on a significant cultural area and its impact on the Bible (focus on the NT but this not need be exclusive). Demonstrate your study's impact on interpretation. Half the description should describe the cultural phenomenon and the other should focus on the biblical text. This may be done through focusing on a specific passage(s) or on a theme. **The PhD student will also prepare to teach a session on his or her topic at the end of the semester. Therefore, meeting with the professor early in order to determine a topic not covered in class will be necessary. Also, the student may wish to meet with the professor a few times during the semester to discuss teaching strategies, etc. The paper is due on the day the student teaches; however, it is suggested the student submit it early for feedback before teaching.**

V. Course Supplemental Information

Dallas Theological Seminary works to provide reasonable and appropriate accommodations to students with psychological, medical, physical, and learning disabilities. A student desiring or needing accommodations on the basis of such disabilities or of medical incidents such as hospitalization or severe injury is to contact the Director of Services for Students with Disabilities (<https://students.dts.edu/studentlife/disability-services/>). If the student is aware of a condition that may impact his/her studies, the student should contact the Director of Services for Students with Disabilities at prior to the beginning of the semester or at the onset of a crisis.

Receive Weather and Emergency Alerts by Text Message

DTS wants you to be aware of our emergency texting service. We strongly urge you to go to <https://www.dts.edu/account/alerts/> and sign up to receive emergency texts related to weather or disaster school closing.

VI. Course Policies

A. Letter/Numerical Grade Scale

A+ 99-100	B+ 91-93	C+ 83-85	D+ 75-77	F 0-69
A 96-98	B 88-90	C 80-82	D 72-74	
A- 94-95	B- 86-87	C- 78-79	D- 70-71	

B. Weighing of Course Requirements for Grading

Percentage breakdown:

	BE5315:	NT8315
Reading:	20%	10%
Small paper 1:	20%	20%
Small paper 2:	20%	20%
Research paper:	40%	40%
Prep and teaching:	----	10%

VII. Class Schedule

Class #	Date	Lecture Topic	Work Due
1	Aug 27	Introduction to the course; history	
2	Sep 3	Honor/Shame	deSilva, ch 1 King & Stager, ch 1
3	Sep 10	honor/Shame	deSilva, ch 2 King & Stager, 2 (pp. 21-35)
4	Sep 17	Patronage	desilva, ch 3

5	Sep 24	Patronage	deSilva, ch 4
6	Oct 1	Family (including marriage and members)	deSilva, ch 5 Ebeling, intro, chs 1-2
7	Oct 8	Family (including members)	King & Stager, ch 2 (pp. 36-61) Ebeling, chs 3-6 Small paper #1 due
8	Oct 15	Family (including slavery)	deSilva ch. 6 Ebeling, ch 7, conclusion
9	Oct 22	Religion	deSilva, ch 7
10	Oct 29	Religion	King & Stager, ch 6
11	Nov 5	Religion	deSilva, ch 8
12	Nov 12	Miscellaneous topics	King & Stager, ch2 (pp. 61-84) Small paper #2 due
	Nov. 16 - 20	Reading Week	No Classes
	Nov. 23 - 27	Thanksgiving Break	No Classes
13	Dec 3	Miscellaneous topics (PhD Student lead)	King & Stager, chs 4-5 [read pp. 285-300; skim the rest] NT8315: Research paper due on the day the student teaches; however, it is suggested the student submit it early for feedback before teaching

14	Dec 10	Miscellaneous topics (PhD Student lead)	Have completed 150 pages of Ferguson BE5315: Research paper due
	Final Exams (Dec 14-17)	No exam	

OT Reading List

Aharoni, Yohanan. *The Land of the Bible*. Trans. by A. F. Rainey. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1979.

Bailey, A. E. *Daily Life in Bible Times*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1943.

Borowski, Oded. *Daily Life in Biblical Times*. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003.

Budden, Charles W. *The Local Colour of the Bible*. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1925.

Carter, Charles E. and Carol L. Meyers, ed. *Community, Identity, and Ideology: Social Sciences Approaches to the Hebrew Bible*. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1996.

Clements, R. E., ed. *The World of Ancient Israel*. Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1989.

Corswant, W. *A Dictionary of Life in Bible Times*. Bungay, England: Hodder & Stoughton, 1960.

Dearman, J. Andrew. *Religion and Culture in Ancient Israel*. Peabody: Hendrickson, 1992.

Deist, Ferdinand E. *The Material Culture of the Bible*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000

de Vaux, Roland. *Ancient Israel*. 2 vols. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1965.

Deursen, Arie van. *Illustrated Dictionary of Bible Manners*. New York: Philosophical Library, 1967.

Diamond, Jared. *Guns, Germs, and Steel*. New York: W. W. Norton, 1997.

Everyday Life in Bible Times. Washington: National Geographic Society, 1977.

Farb, Peter. *The Land, Wildlife, and Peoples of the Bible*. New York: Harper & Row, 1967.

Great People of the Bible and How They Lived. Pleasantville: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1956.

Heaton, E. W. *Everyday Life in Old Testament Times*. New York: Macmillan, 1988.

Hooke, S. H. *Myth, Ritual, and Kingship*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1958.

Jirku, Anton. *The World of the Bible*. Cleveland: The World Publishing Co., 1957.

Kellner, Esther. *The Background of the Old Testament*. Garden City: Doubleday & Co., 1963.

Kitchen, K. A. *Ancient Orient and Old Testament*. London: Tyndale, 1966.

Matthews, Victor H. *Manners and Customs in the Bible*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1991

Mazar, B. (ed.) *Views of the Biblical World*. Jerusalem: International Publishing Co., 1958.

Miller, M. S. and J. L. *Encyclopedia of Bible Life*. New York: Harper & Row, 1955.

Noth, Martin. *The Old Testament World*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966.

Pedersen, Johannes. *Israel, Its Life and Culture*. 4 vols. London: Oxford University Press, 1926.

Perdue, Leo G. *Families in Ancient Israel*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1997.

Pfeiffer, Charles (ed.) *The Biblical World*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1966.

Radin, Max. *The Life of the People in Biblical Times*. New York: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1929.

Thompson, J. A. *Handbook of Life in Bible Times*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1986.

Van Der Woude, A. S. (ed.). *The World of the Bible*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1986.

_____. *The World of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1988.

For specific topics the following should be consulted:

Anchor Bible Dictionary. 6 vols. New York, NY: Doubleday, 1992.

Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament. 3rd ed. Ed. James B. Pritchard, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969.

Civilizations of the Ancient Near East. 5 vols. Ed. Jack Sasson. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1995.

The Context of Scripture. 3 vols. Ed William W. Hallo and K. Lawson Younger Jr.. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1997–2002.

International Standard Bible Encyclopedia. 4 vols. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1988.

Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible. 4 vols. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962.

Jewish Encyclopedia. 12 vols. New York: KTAV Publishing House, 1964.

The New Unger's Bible Dictionary. Chicago: Moody Press, 1988.

The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible. 5 vols. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing Co., 1975.

OT Topics List

1. Marriage, women, and children
2. Hebrew social life and classes
3. Israelite political life
4. Israelite economic life
5. Israelite legal institutions
6. Armies and war
7. Death and funeral rites
8. Time and the calendar
9. Weights and measures
10. Agriculture
11. Education
12. Medicine and healing
13. Arts and crafts
14. Sabbaths and holy days
15. The priesthood and Levites
16. Sanctuaries, altars, and sacrifice

NT Bibliography (Other sources mentioned in class)

A. Jewish Culture

1. Primary sources

Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the OT, ed. R. H. Charles

Babylonian Talmud translated into English, ed. I Epstein

Dead Sea Scriptures, trans. M. Burrows, A. Dupont-Summer,

T. Gaster, G. Vermes (The Hebrew is available in *Die Texte aus Qumran*, E. Lohse).

Josephus
 Legends of the Jews, ed. L. Ginzburg
 Mishnah, trans. H. Danby, P. Blackman
 Philo
 Targum of Isaiah, ed. J. Stenning
 Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan ben Uzziel on the Pentateuch with Fragments of the Jerusalem
 Targum,
 ed. J. Etheridge
 Rabbinic Anthology, ed. C. Montefiore and H. Loewe

2. Secondary Sources

Bailey, K. Poet and Peasant, 1976
 Bowker, J. The Targums and Rabbinic Literature, 1960
 Dalman, G. Jesus-Jeshua, 1929
 Derrett, J. Law in the NT, 1970; Jesus's Audience
 _____, Studies in the NT, 1977 (vol. 1), 1980 (vol. 2), 1983 (vol. 3)
 Edersheim, A. Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, 1889
 _____, Sketches of Jewish Social Life, 1876
 _____, Temple, 1908
 Farmer, W. Maccabees, Zealots, and Josephus, 1956
 Finegan, J. Archeology of the NT, 1969
 Goodenough, E. Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period, 1953-68
 _____, Jurisprudence of Jewish Courts in Egypt, 1968
 Grant, F. Economic Background of the Gospels, 1926
 Hoehner, H. Herod Antipas, 1972
 Jeremias, J. Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus, 1969
 Jewish People in the First Century, ed. S. Safrai et. al., 1974
 MacNamara, Targum and Testament, 1972
 Moore, G. Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era, 1927
 Neusner, J. Christianity, Judaism and other Greco-Roman Cults, 1975
 _____, Early Rabbinic Judaism, 1975
 _____, First Century Judaism in Crisis, 1975
 _____, History of the Mishnaic Law of Purities, 1974
 Oppenheimer, A. Am ha-aretz: A Study in the Social History of the Jewish
 People in the Hellenistic-Roman Period, 1977
 Rost, L. Judaism Outside the Hebrew Canon, 1976
 Schürer, E. The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ, rev. ed.,
 1973
 Sevenster, J. Do You Know Greek? How Much Greek Could the First Jewish
 Christians Have Known? 1968
 Smallwood, M. The Jews under Roman Rule, 1976
 Urbach, E. The Sages, 1979

B. Greco-Roman Culture

1. Primary Sources

Ammianus Marcellinus
 Ausonius
 Austin, M. The Hellenistic World from Alexander to the Roman Conquest, 1981
 Bagnall, R. and Derow, P. Greek Historical Documents:
 The Hellenistic Period, 1981
 Barrett, C. K. NT Background: Selected Documents, 1956
 Caesar
 Cato
 Celsus
 Cicero
 Columella
 Dio Cassius
 Dio Chrysostom

Epictetus
 Galen
 Horace
 Juvenal
 Lewis, N. Roman Civilization: The Empire, 1955
 Martial
 Menander
 Miller, S. Arete: Ancient Writers, Papyri and Inscriptions on the History and Ideals
 of Greek Athletics and Games, 1979
 Ovid
 Papyri
 Pausanias
 Pliny
 Plutarch
 Polybius
 Robinson, R. Sources for the History of Greek Athletics, 1955
 Scriptures Historiae Augustae
 Seneca
 Silius Italicus
 Strabo
 Suetonius
 Tacitus
 Vegetius
 Velleius Paterculus
 Virgil
 Vitruvius

2. Secondary Sources

Amos, H. and Lang, A. These Were the Greeks, 1979
 Bar-Kochba, B. The Seleucid Army, 1976
 den Boer, W. Private Morality in Ancient Greece and Rome, 1979
 Cambridge Ancient History, vol. 10, 1934
 Carcopino, J. Daily Life in Ancient Rome, 1940
 Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities, 1870
 Dill, S. Roman Society from Nero to Marcus Aurelius, 1920

 Earl, D. The Moral and Political Tradition of Rome, 1967
 Foakes-Jackson, F. and Lake, K. Beginnings of Christianity,
 vols. 1, 2, 5, 1920-33
 Glover, T. World of the NT, 1931
 Grant, F. Roman Hellenism and the NT, 1962
 Grant, M. World of Rome, 1960
 Harris, H. Sports in Greece and Rome, 1972
 Hooper, F. Roman Realities, 1979
 Illustrated Encyclopedia of the Classical World, 1975
 Jaeger, W. Paideia: The Ideals of Greek Culture, 1947
 Jones, A. Cities of the Eastern Roman Provinces, 1971
 Kurtz, D. and Boardman, J. Greek Burial Customs, 1971
 Lacey, W. The Family in Classical Greece, 1968
 Landels, J. Engineering in the Ancient World, 1978
 Luttwak, E. The Grand Strategy of the Roman Empire, 1976
 MacMullen, R. Roman Social Relations, 1974
 Magie, D. Roman Rule in Asia Minor, 1950
 Maiuri, A. Roman Painting, 1953
 Mazzolani, L. Idea of the City in Roman Thought, 1970
 Mommsen, T. The Provinces of the Roman Empire, 1909
 Oxford Classical Dictionary, 1970
 Perowne, S. Roman Mythology, 1969
 Pfitzner, V. Paul and the Agon Motif: Traditional Athletic Imagery in the Pauline Literature, 1967
 Ramsey, W. Cities of St. Paul, 1907

_____, St. Paul: Traveller and Roman Citizen, 1897
 Rostovtzeff, M. Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire, 1957
 Scarborough, J. Roman Medicine, 1969
 Sherwin-White, A. Roman Citizenship, 1973
 _____, Roman Society and Roman Law in the NT, 1963
 Smith, J. Voyage and Shipwreck of St. Paul, 1880
 Staveley, E. Greek and Roman Voting and Elections, 1972
 Toynbee, J. Death and Burial in the Roman World, 1971
 Treggiari, S. Roman Freedmen during the Late Republic, 1969
 Watson, G. Roman Soldier, 1967
 White, K. Roman Farming, 1970
 _____, Agricultural Implements of the Roman World, 1967

C. General Works

Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt, 1972-
 Benko, S. and O'Rourke, J. The Catacombs and the Colosseum, 1971
 Bible Almanac, 1980
 Bouquet, A. C. Everyday Life in NT Times, 1953
 Budden, C. The Local Colour of the Bible, vol. 3, 1925
 Dictionary of Life in Bible Times, 1960
 Encyclopedia of Bible Life, 1955
 Encyclopedia Britannica 15th ed., 1974
 Encyclopedia Judaica, 1964
 Fairweather, W. The Background of the Gospels, 1920
 _____, Jesus and the Greeks, 1924
 Foerster, W. From the Exile to Christ, 1964
 Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible 1962, Supplement 1976
 Lohse, E. The NT Environment, 1976
 New Bible Dictionary, 1962
 Reicke, B. The NT Era, 1968
 Wight, F. Manners and Customs of Bible Lands, 1953

NT TOPICS LIST*Family Life*

parent-child
 husband-wife
 marriage
 divorce

Housing

furniture
 clothing
 food

Hospitality

feasting
 banqueting
 dancing

Death

mourning
 burial

Economics

trades
 taxes

*Education**Language**Law*

courts
 punishment
 legislation

*Government**Army**Social Classes*

Sadducees
 Pharisees
 Herodians

Essenes
 Zealots
 patrician
 plebian
 citizens
 slaves
 freedmen

*Travel**Correspondence**Art**Music*

Entertainment
Literature

Diaspora